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ABSTRACT

In 1993, San Diego City College performed an evaluation of its Title III Mentoring Program to assess its efficacy in improved student outcomes. The program consisted of faculty-counselor teams and peer mentors to provide student support. Surveys were distributed to students asking about knowledge and use of campus services, campus climate, and personal growth. Due to the low rate of response (30%), caution is advised in interpreting the results. Responses indicated that student proteges were more likely than the general student population to be aware of certain support services, but less likely to be aware of academic counseling services. The majority of proteges and students in general reported very positive experiences at City College and anticipated future educational success. Proteges were more likely to interact with and seek support from faculty members. Students felt that their experiences at City College contributed to their personal growth, except in the area of "becoming aware of different cultures." Overall, students reported improvement in their writing and time management skills, and an increased knowledge of campus services. Suggestions included more interaction with faculty and improved implementation of the program. The Title III Mentoring Program Survey is appended. (YKH)

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San Diego City College

Title III Mentoring Program

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San Diego City College
Title III - Mentoring Program

I. Background

In the Spring 1990, San Diego City College received a five-year grant under the Title III program to improve outcomes for its students. This report summarizes the findings of an evaluation of the Faculty advising and mentoring component. The Title III Mentoring program began in the spring 1991 semester. During the first semester, faculty reviewed the literature on mentoring programs, attended staff development workshops, conducted a needs assessment and developed the content of the program.

As initially conceptualized, the program would have two parts:

1. Faculty-counselor teams - to better integrate student support services and academic programs and provide training and support to improve the scope and quality of faculty advising and mentoring.

2. Peer mentors - to provide additional support to program participants.

Program participants ("protégés") were identified on the basis of career interests, first-generation college, and ethnic under representation. Faculty mentors were asked to maintain weekly contacts with their protégés via the phone or written correspondence. Due to staffing changes, the mentoring program was without a program coordinator several times during the first two years of implementation. These disruptions contributed to a fragmented and often uneven implementation phase.

II. Methodology

The program coordinator and Research and Planning Office staff developed a student survey to assess the affects of the program on protégés. Questions on the survey asked students about their knowledge and use of campus services, their perceptions of the campus climate, and their personal growth in specific areas. The survey consisted of 51 fixed-response questions and 2 open-ended questions.

The survey and scannable answer sheets were distributed by the program coordinator at a regularly scheduled meeting of program participants. Thirty of the 100 surveys distributed were returned for a response rate of 30%. Due to the small number of completed surveys, caution is advised in interpreting the results.

III. Findings and Discussion

Demographic and background characteristics of survey respondents

Seventy-two percent of the respondents (N=18) were female; 28.0% were male. One-fourth of the students were new to City, while one-third had over 37 cumulative units. Two-thirds of the respondents declared "transfer to a four-year university" (N=9, 36.0%) or "earn a vocational certificate" (N=8, 32.0%) as their educational goal. More than two-thirds of respondents (68.0%) reported spending 6 or more hours on campus outside of class, compared to 23.9% of the general City student population (SDCCD Research and Planning (November 1993)).

Recognition and Use of Student Support Services

One of the goals of the mentoring program is to help protégés link-up with support services. Questions 7 through 23 were designed to assess the recognition, use of, and satisfaction with selected student support services and programs. The 17 services and programs were rated using the following scale suggested in the Matriculation Local Research Options Handbook:

(A) Have never heard of it
(B) Heard of it, but have never used it
(C) Have used it, but was not satisfied
(D) Have used, and found it helpful
(E) Have used it, and found it very helpful

Table 1 displays the recognition and use indices for the 17 services and programs. Satisfaction indices could not be calculated due to the small number of responses. Indices for the general student population at City were derived from responses to a student survey administered during the Spring 1993 semester (SDCCD Research and Planning (July 1993)).

Table 1

	Recognition		Use Index	
	Protégé (N=30)	City Students* (N=847)	Protégé (N=30)	City Students* (N=847)
Library	93.3	94.8	75.0	74.0
Writing Center	66.7	NA	55.0	NA
Tutorial	93.3	87.9	53.6	40.1
Job Placement	76.7	81.1	13.0	25.4
EOPS	86.7	77.4	42.3	32.4
Health	93.3	86.3	64.3	32.8
Financial Aid	100.0	94.1	73.3	49.3
ASPIRE	43.3	NA	30.8	NA
Child Dev Center	90.0	NA	11.1	NA
Academic Counseling	70.0	90.2	61.9	60.6
ILC	63.3	73.7	68.4	51.9
PUENTE	16.7	NA	60.0	NA
Computer Ctr	46.7	NA	50.0	NA
Transfer Center	73.3	68.1	45.5	27.6
DSPS	83.3	69.0	8.0	11.5
Orientation	90.0	NA	59.3	NA
Testing/Assessment	86.2	86.8	72.0	62.5

*Data from Student Survey (Spring 1993)
NA - Question not asked of general City student population

Questionnaire Scale:

(A) Have never heard of it
(B) Heard of it, but have never used it
(C) Used it, but was not satisfied
(D) Used it and found it helpful
(E) Used it and found it very helpful

1. Recognition = $\frac{B+C+D+E}{A+B+C+D+E}$

2. Use = $\frac{C+D+E}{B+C+D+E}$

Protégés were more likely than the general student population at City to be aware of and use certain support services: the Tutorial Center, Educational Opportunity Programs and Services (EOPS), Health Services, Financial Aid, and the Transfer Center. This may or may not be attributable to involvement in the mentoring program but may be a function of the amount of time spent on campus outside of class by protégés (68.0% spent 6 or more hours on campus outside of class compared to 23.9% of the general student population). Protégés were less likely than other City students to be aware of academic counseling services and the Instructional Learning Center (ILC). Of those whom were aware of the two services, however, a higher proportion used them.

Questions 24 through 46 were aimed at student experiences at City College. Table 2 displays the proportion of protégés who responded that the likelihood of the asked event occurring was "some" to "very good." The majority of protégés were satisfied with their experiences in (71.4%) and outside of class (92.9%). Ninety percent of the respondents believed that they would be successful in all of their classes this semester, would return to City next semester, and would complete their educational goal.

Table 2

	Protégé % (N=30)	City Students* % (N=69)
Withdraw or drop class	10.3	NA
Satisfied with academic experiences at City	71.4	88.0
Drop out before obtain educational goal	10.3	6.4
Where to go for help with courses	82.1	NA
Return to City next semester	90.0	NA
Join student organization at City	53.3	NA
Attend extracurricular event at City	51.9	NA
Get "C" or better in all classes	90.0	NA
Satisfied with experiences outside of class	92.9	NA

*Data from Student Survey (Spring 1993), Campus Climate survey (Spring 1994) and Title III City Blocks Survey (Fall 1992)

NA - Question not asked of general City student population

For questions 33 through 46, students were asked the extent to which they agreed with statements related to the "climate" at City College. In general, protégés were more likely to agree ("strongly agree" and "agree" responses combined) with the statements. Like the general City student population, protégés had very positive experiences. The vast majority were excited about going to school (96.7%), and believed that faculty and staff (92.6%) and their friends (81.5%) were supportive of their academic success.

An important component of the mentoring program is personal contact by the faculty advisor. Protégés were more likely than other students to report seeing a faculty member to discuss academic and career goals (70.0% compared to 64.7%), and to know where to seek help from for a personal (60.9% versus 51.8%) or school-related problem (88.8% versus 74.0%).

Table 3

	Protégé % (N=30)	City Students* % (N=934)
Excited about going to school	96.7	91.2
Seek help for school-related problems	88.8	74.0
Faculty/staff concerned about success	92.6	88.8
Knowledgeable of events on campus	42.9	NA
I have many friends on campus	70.0	61.8
Campus friends supportive of good grades	81.5	NA
Have used campus library	56.7	NA
Frequently participate in class discussions	90.0	NA
Encouraged to participate in campus activities	40.7	NA
Feel free to talk w/instructors outside class	93.3	87.2
Instructors respect student viewpoints	83.3	86.5
Seek help with personal problems	60.9	51.8
College experience been what I expected	77.8	NA
Seen faculty to discuss school/career	70.0	64.7

*Data from Student Survey (Spring 1993), Campus Climate survey (Spring 1994) and Title III City Blocks Survey (Fall 1992)

NA - Question not asked of general City student population

Personal Growth

During the last decade there has been a shift in emphasis from open access to student outcomes (accountability). A number of legislative mandates now require colleges to document their affects on student learning and development. Questions 47 to 51 were designed to explore this concept of "value-added" assessment: how has the training, education, and experiences at City College affected the learning and development of these students?

Table 4

	Protégé % (N=30)	City Students* % (N=69)
Presenting written ideas clearly and concisely	89.7	88.3
Becoming aware of different cultures	70.0	81.6
Understanding my abilities and interests	86.2	81.9
Effectively managing my time	72.4	71.3
Growth in self-confidence	80.0	NA

*Data from Student Survey (Spring 1993), Campus Climate survey (Spring 1994) and Title III City Blocks Survey (Fall 1992)

NA - Question not asked of general City student population

The majority of protégés felt that the education, training, and experiences at City College had contributed to their personal growth in the five areas. The proportion of protégés who reported "some" or "very much" growth was comparable to the general student population with the exception of "becoming aware of different cultures" which was somewhat lower.

There is evidence that student self-reports can function as proxies for growth in learning. For example, Pike (1995) found that certain self-reported variables were strongly related to achievement test scores in English and Mathematics. For English, self-reported interaction with faculty and peers and college writing were significantly related to achievement. The data in Tables 3 and 4 contain two such proxies (presenting written ideas and interaction with faculty) which are similar to the variables used by Pike. In addition, self-reported variables such as extracurricular involvement, are perceptions of the college environment had significant positive effects on mathematics achievement. Results similar to mathematics were found for science achievement[1]. Although the linkage between self-reported measures and student cognitive growth are not conclusive, prior research has suggested that self-reported proxies of student involvement, interaction with faculty, and time spent on campus have a significant positive affect on student achievement.

[1]It is important to note that Pike's study relied on scales as indicators for self-reported measures. The Protégé questionnaire relied on single questions for self-reported data. Comparisons made should be interpreted with some caution.

Open-ended questions

Two open-ended questions asked protégés to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the mentoring program. Many students stated that they had not been involved in the program long enough to fairly evaluate it. Of the protégés who did have comments (N=12), half stated that the friendships and support they received from their peer mentor had been the most helpful to them. Four students said that the assistance they received with specific course or skill was helpful. The remaining two students indicated that they benefited most by the information (about services, campus life, etc.) provided by the program.

Suggestions for improving the program mainly dealt with problems associated with fragmented implementation and logistical issues (N=9): starting earlier in the semester, getting the word out that such a program exists, scheduling problems. Other suggestions included: more interaction with faculty, professionals/speakers and university campus tours.

Summary

Students generally reported favorable and positive ratings both of the program and individual improvement. Overall students responding to the survey indicated they had improved their writing skills, time management and knowledge of campus services. However these data need to be interpreted with some caution because of the low response rates. Out of 100 surveys, only 30 were returned. This low rate limits the reliability of the findings.

Appendix A

TITLE III
Mentoring Program Survey

Please answer the following questions about yourself.

1. Gender: 1. female 2. male

2. How many units are you enrolled in this semester?

   1. 0 - 3 units
   2. 3.5 - 6.5 units
   3. 6.5 - 11.5 units
   4. 12 - 14 units
   5. 15 or more units

3. How many college units have you completed BEFORE this semester?

   1. 0 units (This is my first semester)
   2. 1 - 12 units
   3. 13 - 24 units
   4. 25 - 36 units
   5. 37 or more units

4. What is your current educational goal?

   1. Acquire or update job skills
   2. Associates degree
   3. Earn or maintain a vocational certificate
   4. Transfer to a 4-year university
   5. Other _____

5. Number of hours per week you spend on campus outside of class (e.g., working, studying, socializing, attending office hours):

   1. 0 hours (only come for class, then leave)
   2. 1 - 2 hours
   3. 3 - 5 hours
   4. 6 - 9 hours
   5. 10 or more hours

6. Your racial/ethnic group: _____

TITLE III
Mentoring Program Survey

Indicate which one of the following statements best describes your experience with each campus service or program. Use the following scale for questions 7 - 23:

1. Have never heard of it
2. Heard of it, but have never used it
3. Have used it, but was not satisfied
4. Have used it, and found it helpful
5. Have used it, and found it very helpful

7. Library services	1	2	3	4	5
8. Writing Center services	1	2	3	4	5
9. Tutorial services	1	2	3	4	5
10. Job Placement Center services	1	2	3	4	5
11. Extended Opportunities Programs & Services (EOPS)	1	2	3	4	5
12. Student Health Center services	1	2	3	4	5
13. Financial Aid services	1	2	3	4	5
14. ASPIRE project	1	2	3	4	5
15. Child Development Center services	1	2	3	4	5
16. Academic Counseling services	1	2	3	4	5
17. Independent Learning Center (ILC)	1	2	3	4	5
18. PUENTE project	1	2	3	4	5
19. Microcomputer Center (MCC)	1	2	3	4	5
20. Transfer Center services	1	2	3	4	5
21. Disabled Student Program and Services (DSPS)	1	2	3	4	5
22. Orientation	1	2	3	4	5
23. Testing and Assessment	1	2	3	4	5

Please indicate which one of the following statements best describes the likelihood that you will do the following.

	very good chance	some chance	little chance	no chance	don't know
24. withdraw or drop out of one or more of my classes this semester.	1	2	3	4	5
25. be satisfied with my academic experiences at City College.	1	2	3	4	5
26. drop out before obtaining my educational goal.	1	2	3	4	5

	very good chance	some chance	little chance	no chance	don't know
27. know where to go for help with choosing the courses I need to complete my educational goal.	1	2	3	4	5
28. return to City College next semester.	1	2	3	4	5
29. join a student organization at City (e.g. student government, student club).	1	2	3	4	5
30. attend an extracurricular event associated with City (e.g. athletic event, City sponsored dance, concert or play).	1	2	3	4	5
31. get a "C" or better in all of my classes this semester.	1	2	3	4	5
32. be satisfied with my experiences at City College outside of the classroom.	1	2	3	4	5

Indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.

	strongly agree	agree	disagree	strongly disagree	don't know
33. I am excited about going to school.	1	2	3	4	5
34. If I have a school-related problem, there is a faculty or staff member that I can seek help from.	1	2	3	4	5
35. I believe that the faculty and staff are concerned about my academic success.	1	2	3	4	5
36. I am knowledgeable of events on campus.	1	2	3	4	5
37. I have many friends on campus.	1	2	3	4	5
38. My friends on campus are supportive of my getting good grades.	1	2	3	4	5
39. I have used or checked out materials from the campus library.	1	2	3	4	5
40. I frequently participate in class discussions.	1	2	3	4	5
41. Students are encouraged to participate in on-campus activities.	1	2	3	4	5
42. I feel free to talk with my instructors outside of the classroom.	1	2	3	4	5
43. Instructors respect student points of view that are different from their own.	1	2	3	4	5
44. If I have a family, financial or other personal problem, there is some *on campus* I trust to seek help from.	1	2	3	4	5
45. My college experience so far has been what I expected.	1	2	3	4	5
46. I have seen a faculty member several times during the semester to discuss academic or career concerns.	1	2	3	4	5

How much did the education and training you received at this campus contribute to your personal growth in the following areas.

	very much	some	very little	don't know
47. Presenting ideas and information clearly and concisely in a written assignment.	1	2	3	4
48. Becoming aware of different cultures and philosophies.	1	2	3	4
49. Understanding myself - my abilities and interests.	1	2	3	4
50. Effectively managing my time.	1	2	3	4
51. My self-confidence.	1	2	3	4

Please answer the following questions in the white space on the **back** of the answer sheet.

52. What aspects of the mentoring program have been the most helpful to you?

53. How can the mentoring program be improved?

Please return your completed survey and scanable answer sheet to the **Mentoring Program (room C-224E) or to your faculty mentor by November 17, 1994.**

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